

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0167
INFO AMCONSUL BORDEAUX
AMCONSUL LYON
AMCONSUL MARSEILLE
AMCONSUL NICE
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, FR
SUBJECT: OLIVIER STIRN--SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
FOREIGN AFFAIRS

1. HOLDING ADVANCED DEGREES IN LAW AND POLITICAL SCIENCE FROM THE PARIS INSTITUTE OF POLITICAL STUDIES, OLIVIER STIRN (BORN 1936) JOINED THE STAFF OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN CHARGE OF OVERSEAS DEPARTMENTS AND TERRITORIES IN 1964, FOLLOWING EARLIER SERVICE IN THE PREFECTURAL ADMINISTRATION. IN 1965 HE WAS NAMED HEAD OF STAFF FOR THE MINISTRY BEFORE MOVING ON TO TAKE OVER THE SAME POSITION WITH THE MINISTERIES OF COOPERATION (1966) AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS (1967-1968). IN 1973, HE BECAME SECRETARY OF STATE IN CHARGE OF RELATIONS WITH PARLIAMENT, A POST WHICH HE RETAINED THROUGH THE 1974 CABINET CHANGE. LATER THAT YEAR, HE WAS NAMED SECRETARY OF STATE FOR OVERSEAS DEPARTMENTS AND TERRITORIES.

2. PRIOR TO HIS STINT AS SECRETARY OF STATE FOR PARLIAMENTARY RELATIONS, STIRN HAD BEEN ELECTED UDR DEPUTY
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FROM THE CALVADOS DEPARTMENT IN 1968 AND KEPT HIS SEAT IN THE 1973 ELECTIONS (AGAIN AS UDR). IN JANUARY OF 1977, HOWEVER, STIRN QUIT THE RPR (REPORTEDLY IN OPPOSITION TO CHIRAC'S CANDIDACY FOR MAYOR OF PARIS) AND IN JULY OF THAT YEAR, JOINED THE RADICAL SOCIALISTS OF JEAN-JACQUES SERVAN-SCHREIBER. HE WAS REELECTED IN MARCH 1978 AS A UDF-RADICAL SOCIALIST CANDIDATE FROM

THE SAME CIRCUMSCRIPTION.

3. STIRN HAD THE REPUTATION OF BEING ONE OF THE HARDEST-WORKING AND MOST POLITICALLY ASTUTE OF THE YOUNG GAULLISTS. IN 1974, HE SIGNED THE "CALL OF 43", ORGANIZED BY CHIRAC TO THROW SIGNIFICANT GAULLIST SUPPORT BEHIND GISCARD'S ELECTION CAMPAIGN. HOLDING A POSITION AS SECRETARY OF STATE FIRST UNDER PRIME MINISTER CHIRAC AND THEN THROUGH THREE BARRE GOVERNMENTS WOULD INDICATE THAT THE PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER CONTINUE TO HAVE BIG CONFIDENCE IN HIS ABILITIES. A LE MONDE ARTICLE ON STIRN (APRIL 8, 1978) NOTED BOTH HIS LONGEVITY AND HIS WORK CHARACTERISTICS. COMMENTING ON THE VARIOUS PROBLEMS WHICH HAD ARISEN VIS-A-VIS FRANCE'S DEPARTMENTS AND TERRITORIES OVERSEAS (MAYOTTE, DJIBOUTI, NEW CALEDONIA), LE MONDE COMMENTED THAT WHILE HE DID NOTHING REVOLUTIONARY OR EXTRAORDINARY, STIRN HAD DEMONSTRATED PATIENCE, SENSITIVITY AND DETERMINATION IN WORKING THROUGH THE PROBLEMS WITH THE VARIOUS AREAS CONCERNED. IN DOMESTIC POLITICS, STIRN MOST RECENTLY PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CARREFOUR SOCIAL DEMOCRATS (CSD). THE CSD IS AN ORGANIZATION (STUDY GROUP) DESIGNED TO PROVIDE A NON-POLITICAL FORUM FOR CENTRISTS (MAJORITY AND OPPOSITION) TO DISCUSS MAJOR PROBLEMS. THE CSD LEADERSHIP IS GISCARDIAN AND IT IS CLEARLY INTENDED AS A FORUM FOR ESTABLISHING A DIALOGUE WITH THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LEFT.

4. STIRN HAS LONG BEEN AN IMPORTANT EMBASSY CONTACT. HE HAS BEEN OFFERED LEADER GRANTS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, BUT HAS BEEN UNABLE TO ACCEPT, DUE TO THE PRESS OF BUSINESS. STIRN IS MARRIED AND HAS TWO CHILDREN. HARTMAN

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